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# *The* **Catalyst**

**The Newsletter for Interpretation in California State Parks**  
Fall 2007

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**Interpreting Cultural Landscapes**

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## Contributor's Guidelines

*The Catalyst* welcomes your original articles up to two pages in length. We prefer unpublished material, but will occasionally reprint items published elsewhere. Be sure to include information about the publication so we can get permission to use the material. You may submit an article at any time. Please include a photo whenever possible.

We really appreciate items submitted on disk or by e-mail. We can read most DOS/Windows file formats. Please send photos as separate files, not inserted into your document. You may also submit original photos or other illustrations to *The Catalyst*. All photos and artwork submitted will be returned promptly. We reserve the right to edit all material. Items are selected for publication solely at the discretion of the editor and publisher. We appreciate your suggestions.

## Guest Editors Wanted!

Are you looking for an opportunity to work with other writers on engaging interpretive topics? Would you like to develop and challenge your creative and technical skills? Consider becoming a Guest Editor for an upcoming issue of *The Catalyst*! Among the topics we're planning for future issues are:

**Interpretation and Technology**

**Interpreting Climate Change**

Please contact Donna Pozzi with your ideas: [DPOZZ@parks.ca.gov](mailto:DPOZZ@parks.ca.gov)



### On the cover:

Cup-shaped depressions tell a story of the Miwok people, whose grinding stones are preserved in the cultural landscape at Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park.



# From the Editor



## Class photo of the 2006 Cultural Resources Interpretation course, Mott Training Center

The idea of a thematic issue on "Interpreting Cultural Landscapes" came as the result of a wonderful session on the same topic that was part of the 2006 Cultural Resources Interpretation course offered at Mott Training Center. Facilitated by Karen Barrett, the three-hour session included five speakers on topics ranging from "An Introduction to Recognizing and Interpreting Cultural Landscapes" to "Tools to Help Interpret the Landscape."

Following their presentations, the speakers and I discussed the possibility of an expanded session for the next CRI course (slated for Fall 2008) and an issue of *The Catalyst* devoted to interpreting cultural landscapes.

Three of the speakers agreed to contribute to this issue. Karen Barrett, Regional Interpretive Specialist, (KBARR@parks.ca.gov) begins with "Three Reasons Interpreters Need to Know about Cultural Landscapes." Marianne Hurley, State Historian II, (mhurley@parks.ca.gov) explores the "Heirlooms of an Historic Fruit Orchard." The four general types of cultural landscapes are explained by Jan Wooley, State Historian III. Jan works with the department's Cultural Stewardship Program and can be reached at jewool@parks.ca.gov.

Three articles give us a sense of cultural landscape experiences through diverse programming. Ranger Shera McDonald (smcdonald@parks.ca.gov) gives us "A Taste of the California Citrus Landscape" and Supervising Ranger Chuck Bancroft (cbancroft@parks.ca.gov) takes us "Time

Traveling to an Ohlone Village." Museum Curator II Linda Cooper (lcooper@parks.ca.gov) invites us to Shasta's historic cemetery tours that lay "Buried Under a Cultural Landscape."

District Interpretive Specialist Victoria Kastner (vkastner@parks.ca.gov) updates us on Hearst Castle's garden restoration project. Victoria is also busy preparing her second publication with Harry N. Abrams, Inc. The book, "San Simeon: The Gardens and the Landscape," will include 250 photographs taken by Staff Photographer I Victoria Garagliano.

Mark Faull, Retired State Park Ranger, (faullasylum@msn.com) traces the culturally significant desert landscape of Red Rock Canyon State Park. Mark spent 20 years of public service at this spectacular location before retiring three years ago.

Can recreation include cultural landscape elements to provide an interpretive experience? Wes Chapin, Regional Interpretive Specialist, (wchap@parks.ca.gov) takes us on a playground-planning ride, sharing lessons in "Swinging Interpretation."

My first cultural landscape project began several years ago when I was an Interpreter I at Pío Pico State Historic Park. It was during this time that I met Karen Adams, Associate Landscape Architect (kadams@parks.ca.gov). My interview with Karen reveals some of the deeper meanings to be found through the interpretation of cultural landscapes.

We conclude with California's Tapestry, looking back at a personal experience in one of many cultural landscapes to be found in California State Parks.

Upcoming interpretive courses and additional cultural landscape resources can be found on page 4. The "Dear Master Interpreter" page is filled with nuggets of information. Enjoy!

-Nancy Mendez,  
Guest Editor

# What's Up?



## Interpreters' Resources

### Spring Interpretation Courses

Something for everyone, offered through the Department's Mott Training Center, Spring 2008:

Working With The Media,  
March 9-12

Cooperating Association Partnership  
Workshop, March 27-30

Interpreting Recreation Areas,  
April 13-18

Natural Resource Interpretation,  
April 27-May 2

Skills for Interpreting to Children,  
May 11-16

Coastal Marine Interpretation,  
May 20-23

Visit [www.parks.ca.gov/mott](http://www.parks.ca.gov/mott) or contact Sara Skinner, Training Specialist, at 831.649-2961 for more details.

### 2008 California Parks Conference

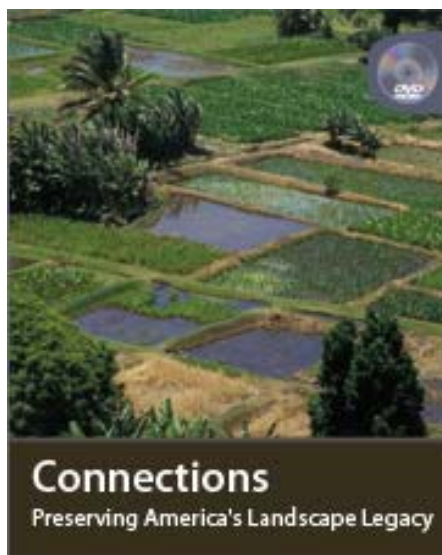
"Clean Water, Clear Vision, Deep Purpose," March 30-April 3, South Shore Lake Tahoe.  
[www.cspra.com](http://www.cspra.com)

### Cultural Landscape Resources

#### "Balance and Complexity: The Vineyard and Beyond"

2008 California Preservation Conference, Napa, April 23-26.

Program includes educational tracks, study tours, and mobile workshops, some addressing cultural landscapes: "Imprints on the Land," "Caves & Sustainable Agriculture," "Native American Cultural Landscapes," and "Historic and Modern Gardens."  
[www.californiapreservation.org](http://www.californiapreservation.org)



### Cultural Landscape Foundation

Nonprofit foundation dedicated to increasing the public's awareness of the importance and irreplaceable legacy of cultural landscapes. Website includes ordering information for "Connections: Preserving America's Landscape Legacy," a 55-minute documentary. [www.tclf.org](http://www.tclf.org)

### The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation

An interdisciplinary professional organization dedicated to the preservation and conservation of historic landscapes, from formal gardens and public parks to rural expanses. [www.ahlp.org](http://www.ahlp.org)

### Society of Ethnobiology

Nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of the relationships of plants and animals with human cultures worldwide. [www.ethnobiology.org](http://www.ethnobiology.org)

### NPS Historic Landscape Initiative

Provides products, services, financial assistance, educational guidance, and technical information.  
[www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hli/index.htm)

### "Expanding the Cultural Conservation Toolbox: New Partnerships and Strategies"

Released by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and San Diego's Save Our Heritage Organization, this report describes issues and actions to protect cultural resources while also protecting natural resources.  
[www.landconserve.com/news.htm](http://www.landconserve.com/news.htm)

### US Government Online Bookstore:

"Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes," edited by Charles Birnbaum with Christine Capella Peters, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1996. Price: \$22.00

"A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process and Techniques," by Robert Page, Cathy Gilbert and Susan Dolan, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1998. Price: \$31.00

Both publications available through <http://bookstore.gpo.gov/>

# Dear Master Interpreter

**Dear Master Interpreter,**

Everybody seems to worry about doing more interpretive PROGRAMS. But I want to make sure we get credit for all of the little interpretive moments too. What really counts in interpretation these days?

Momentary Mike

**Dear Mike,**

Yes, those interpretive moments are important. But formal presented interpretive programs are crucial, too. And so are interpretive publications, wayside panels and even visitor center exhibits. We really need to be doing more on a lot of fronts. So you won't get me to agree that it is ok for a ranger to just do interpretive moments instead of interpretive programs. But I'll go along with you on the "getting credit" idea. Make the extra effort to assure all of your interpretive efforts get recorded. Work with your District Interpretive Coordinator to get your hours entered into the CAMP database. That will be time well spent.

MI

**Dear Master Interpreter,**

We really need to re-do our campfire center. The lighting is bad and the projector stand is in the wrong place for our new digital projector. Are there any good examples out there or do we have to figure out everything on our own?

Campfire Carl

**Dear Carl,**

There is quite a bit of variety in our park campfire centers. A rustic wood CCC vintage amphitheatre in the redwoods is very different from a more modern concrete structure on a southern California beach. And I am not sure I know of one shining example I could hold up for the rest of us to emulate. If someone has a great campfire center plan, I hope they will share it with the rest of us.

Most digital projectors are optimized for use in a boardroom-type space so they have a shorter focal length for use closer to the screen. But many projectors offer the option of replacing the lens with a longer focal length. Be sure to look into that when you buy a projector as it may be easier to change the lens than move the projector podium. When it comes to lighting, we often use the same style floodlights we use outside the restroom buildings. But if you really want a well-lit interpreter, you might want to consider theatre style lighting. Precise reflectors and lenses put the light right where you need it on stage instead of spreading it everywhere.

MI

**Dear Master Interpreter,**

Do you ever get discouraged when the statistics show we are reaching only a tiny fraction of our visitors with our interpretive message and even those that we reach only retain a tiny percentage of the message?

Discouraged

**Dear Discouraged,**

Sure, there are some scary statistics out there. But there are also some quite promising ones. A recent university study at Anza-Borrego showed visitor center message reception increased tremendously with the installation of new exhibits. After experiencing the new exhibits, sixty-four percent of visitors were able to state part of the intended theme, compared to thirty-nine percent with the old exhibits. More often, these numbers for exhibits in general, fall around twenty percent, so this is huge!

MI

**Dear Master Interpreter,**

I need to get some training tapes transcribed. Do you know an easy way to get a typed transcript, short of having a volunteer sit down and transcribe it word for word?

Audio AI

**Dear AI,**

The services you need are surprisingly inexpensive on the web these days. There's a place on the web at <http://transcription.e24tech.com> that will give you one free hour of transcription. Their regular rate is \$21 per hour.

MI



# Three Reasons Interpreters Need To Know About Cultural Landscapes

By Karen J. Barrett

Regional Interpretive Specialist  
Diablo Vista District

## 1. Cultural landscapes provide us with a way to share the geographic context of our park's stories.

Beyond historic buildings, other man-made alterations to the land – fence lines, roads, trails, grinding rocks, and shell mounds – are evidence of human influence. But why are these things found where they are? Be guided by cultural landscape features, and the answer may be revealed.

Cultural landscape features may be subtle, hard to notice or commonplace. Yet the hunger for authenticity is satisfied, and our site honored, when we use these features as tools to help visitors discover the geographic and land use “big picture” reasons the features are located where they are. Visitors take home new knowledge of cultural landscapes, and then may begin to see other places they care about differently.

**2. Cultural landscapes provide us with evidence of how people interacted with the land in the past, and how they have provided for its stewardship.** For example, olives have become a way to connect people with General Mariano Vallejo's agricultural legacy. At Sonoma State Historic Park you'll find a charming Victorian era home, pastoral grounds, and “Vallejo” olive trees planted in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

But adjacent to the parking lot and shading the picnic area are other mature olive trees that were planted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These trees represent stewardship actions taken by state park staff long ago to harmonize with the site's existing cultural landscape. Most likely they were planted in accordance with a 1934 “Parks Division” grounds plan.

The olives continue to inspire a connection with history. In recent years, community volunteers organized to prune the long-living trees and sponsored olive research. An Olive Festival event attracted local farmers, olive enthusiasts and other first time visitors to the park.

## 3. Cultural landscapes provide us with tools to advocate for the visitor

**experience.** Cultural landscape features provide physical evidence of a site's history. When we interpret them, we bring attention to them as important elements of the visitor experience. One way to advocate for the visitor experience is in thoughtful placement of interpretive media. Areas should be selected that do not block viewsheds or historic structures, or intrude on opportunities for “discovery” of a historic scene.

Additionally, sharing the process of appropriately placing media in a cultural landscape with our internal audiences gives us an opportunity to grow the community of support for honoring the visitor experience of park sites.



**Placing interpretive panels at the edge of expansive views respects the visitor experience of a cultural landscape.**

# Heirlooms of a Historic Fruit Orchard

By Marianne Hurley  
State Historian II  
Diablo Vista and North Bay  
Districts

In the hills to the west of Jack London State Historic Park is one of the largest pre-World War II fruit orchards still standing in the Western United States. Planted between 1908 and 1912, it has a history and significance that relates to the development of state hospital farms where these orchards provided food and a livelihood for both patients and staff. Abandoned in the 1960s, this 100-acre orchard illustrates horticultural traditions and management practices that were prevalent before World War II.

Apple, apricot, cherry, peach, pear, plum, and quince trees were planted as part of a self-sustaining hospital farm that also included dairy cattle, hogs, poultry, vegetables, and hay. For about 50 years, this farm operation supported an institutional home for children with developmental disabilities.

In 2002, the orchards and surrounding open space were added to Jack London State Historic Park. Today, the orchard still blooms in the spring with over 25 acres of fruit trees that continue to bear despite their lack of maintenance for many years.

What makes this orchard so different? It reflects the spatial organization, circulation, land use, and types of species used during the first half of the twentieth century.



**The spatial organization and variety of heirloom species contribute to this historic orchard's significance as a cultural landscape.**

Many varieties of heirloom species are still represented in the orchard: ten different varieties of apples, two varieties of pears, and multiple varieties of the remaining fruit trees.

The fruit trees in this historic orchard are full-sized grafted onto seedling rootstocks, requiring wide spacing and intensive pruning to control the hearty growth. This can be contrasted to today's commercial trees that use cloned dwarf rootstock and use a tighter tree spacing pattern. The historic fruit trees are also characterized by their "low head" or short trunk, just 18-30" tall and pruned in an "open-bowl" style to allow more light to enter the tree canopy.

In 2006, several National Park Service landscape specialists were invited to evaluate what remains of the historic orchard. In addition, the landscape specialists generated a historical context for the state hospital, its practice of self-sustainable farming, and the evolution of pre-world War II-era horticultural practices. This historical information will help provide in-depth interpretation, the recommendations for treatment will assist needed maintenance of the orchard by staff and volunteers, and the documentation of what we still have in the orchard will give the park a baseline for the future.



# A Taste of the California Citrus Landscape

**By Ranger Shera McDonald  
California Citrus  
State Historic Park  
Inland Empire District**

California Citrus State Historic Park was opened in August of 1993. The park was acquired to help interpret the importance of the citrus industry on the economy, culture, and history of California. It is the mission of California Citrus SHP to preserve some of the rapidly vanishing cultural landscape of the citrus industry.

The history presented at California Citrus SHP falls right into the local history curriculum for the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, and the early California history for the 4<sup>th</sup> graders. I personally enjoy the school tours. The blatant honesty of our curious young visitors keeps me on my toes.

Since children usually come fully charged with their individual energy packs, one of the best parts of the tour is the hike to the top of the knoll. From there they can actually step into history as we share the stories of how the citrus industry has transformed the California landscape.

Water was brought to the groves through the Gage Canal, which runs through the southeast side of the park. Looking across the ravine, the citrus tree lines paint a picture of how terracing was used to transport the flow of water to the rows of trees. Palm trees point to former main streets and driveways once leading to the homes of the wealthy in the early 1900s.



Descending from the scenic top of the knolls and into the varietals grove, the children get to test their knowledge in a team effort to name as many different citrus as they can. They are always surprised to find that this seemingly small grove has over 80 different types of citrus trees growing in it.

And now the fun begins. The touchy, feely, and sometimes messy part of the tour is experienced in the tasting. From the large pummelo – the great, great grandfather of the grapefruit, to the kumquat – the sweet and sour little citrus that you pop whole into your mouth, the children are eager to give these new fruits a try as long as “Johnny” goes first.

The varietals grove experience is not complete without introducing at least one member of the Blood Orange family. For some reason the name seems to provoke a cringing

response from our first time guests who might be content if “Johnny” eats all of the samples himself. Once they see how eager he is to get more, the brave give it a try. I might add all that have tried the Blood Orange have enjoyed it.

As we walk back to the Visitor Center we chat about the local weather and soil. This soil has made Riverside one of the best places in the world to grow the Navel Oranges as well as a wide variety of citrus that continue to thrive in the area.

With sticky fingers, the students reunite with the rest of their group. At that time, I reflect on the uniqueness of this historic park and why I’m glad to be here. California Citrus SHP is one of the few places in Riverside County that stays green year round. The location of the park has created an outdoor museum that can truly be experienced by park visitors of all ages.



# Restoring the Gardens of Hearst Castle

**By Victoria Kastner**  
**District Interpretive Specialist**  
**San Luis Obispo Coast District**

Coastal breezes rustle Mexican fan palms standing nearly as high as the Castle's bell towers. Citrus trees are bright with fruit. Hundreds of roses cluster among miles of boxwood hedges. It all looked very different in 1919, when William Randolph Hearst and his architect Julia Morgan first came to the remote and rocky slopes of the Hearst family's campsite. Their transformation of rugged chaparral to a lush Mediterranean garden took 28 years, from 1919 to 1947.

William Randolph Hearst knew the paramount importance of the landscape at his San Simeon hilltop estate. In the early 1920s, he asked Morgan for a "profusion and confusion" of blooming plants. They combined these with fully grown Italian cypress and palm trees, hauled up the six-mile drive in trucks, to give a sense of permanence to the compound. The native live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) were carefully saved: they either built around them, or on nearly half a dozen occasions, moved them to more scenic locations on the hill. Hearst knew that abundant landscaping would knit together the buildings into what he called "a harmonious whole."

Julia Morgan had no formal training in landscape architecture. But together this talented architect and her enthusiastic client created the gardens. Hearst pored over nursery catalogues and shelter magazines, barraging Morgan with ideas for

pergolas, fountains, terraces, and plants. They also looked to the Renaissance gardens of southern Spain and northern Italy for their inspiration. Thousands of drawings, hundreds of letters between Hearst, Morgan, and their representatives, dozens of historic photographs, and many oral histories survive, providing rich documentation.



The Hearst Monument is currently restoring these gardens, bringing them closer to Hearst and Morgan's vision for them over 70 years ago. Under the auspices of the National Park Service, the Frederick Law Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation is collaborating with the staff of the San Luis Obispo Coast District to prepare a Cultural Landscape Report on the gardens. The report includes a narrative site history, an inventory of existing conditions, and recommendations for future landscape treatment, all done according to the Secretary of the Interior's "Guidelines for Cultural Landscapes."

The Castle offers a tour of the gardens daily from April 1 to October 31, as often as four times an hour. Guides receive twenty hours of training for this tour, as well as two continuous refresher programs: the Plant of the Week, which gives background, symbolism, and historic detail about specific plants in the gardens; and, Plants in Bloom, which features cuttings and information on the most visible examples. The Castle's nine groundskeepers do a wonderful job of tending the gardens, under the direction of Supervising Groundskeeper Christine Takahashi. They are our greatest interpretive asset.

Next year, the Castle will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a state park. Many visitors will travel to see what Hearst and Morgan created on the hilltop Hearst described as his "little hideaway." The employees at the Hearst Monument are working hard to ensure that the gardens will continue to accurately reflect their creative legacy.



Photographs by Victoria Garagliano  
©Hearst Castle® CA State Parks

# Cultural Landscapes: A Legacy of Location

**By Jan Wooley**  
**State Historian III**  
**Cultural Resources Division**

"All our cultural warts and blemishes are there, and our glories too; but above all, our ordinary day-to-day qualities are exhibited for anybody who wants to find them and knows how to look for them."

These are the words esteemed professor of geography Peirce Lewis uses to describe landscapes made by humans—what geographers, historians, archaeologists, landscape architects and other professions refer to as "cultural landscapes."

Simply stated, cultural landscapes are reflections of how humans have created, shaped or modified the natural environment over time. They may reflect the formal designs of a landscape architect, or reveal how people occupied and manipulated the land for food, settlement, recreation, or industry. From family farms to great estates, Victorian gardens to ethnographic sites, cultural landscapes are special places that tell the story of mankind's association with the natural world.

The National Park Service (NPS), a leader in the identification, documentation and management of historic landscapes, defines a cultural landscape as:

"A geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein,

associated with a historic event, activity or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."

NPS identifies four general types of cultural landscapes:

- 1) historic designed landscapes;
- 2) historic sites;
- 3) historic vernacular landscapes;
- and,
- 4) ethnographic landscapes.

These are not mutually exclusive; it is quite possible that one identified historic landscape may in fact contain multiple landscape types within its boundaries.

"Historic designed landscapes" are probably the most easily recognized

and understood of the four landscape types. They are often planned or laid out by a landscape architect or master gardener to reflect certain design principles, but may also include the work of an amateur gardener implementing a recognized style or tradition. Examples include city parks such as San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, New York's Central Park, the Emerald Necklace in Boston; the designed landscapes of Chicago's Graceland Cemetery and Cambridge's Mount Auburn Cemetery; and the formal gardens of great estates such as Filoli in Woodside and Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument.

A "historic site" is a landscape significant for its association with



**Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument, an example of a "historic designed landscape"**





### **Bodie State Historic Park, a "historic vernacular landscape"**

a historic event, activity or person. Battlefields are often identified as historic sites, as are presidential house properties. Jack London State Historic Park, Angel Island Immigration Station, Will Rogers State Historic Park, and Manzanar National Historic Site—a Japanese internment camp in the Owens Valley—are samples of this landscape type.

The majority of "historic vernacular landscapes" evolve through ordinary use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped the land. Agricultural landscapes, mining landscapes, settlements and industrial complexes are just a few examples. A vernacular landscape may be a single farmstead, or it may contain literally hundreds of associated properties. Bodie State Historic Park is known primarily as a "ghost town;" the buildings and structures in the town's historic core are preserved in a state of arrested decay. But when viewed in the larger context as a vernacular landscape, Bodie SHP represents a vast mining complex complete with adits, tailings piles, mines,

mills, roads and trails—a myriad of associated mining landscape features.

An "ethnographic landscape" contains natural and cultural resources that an associated group of people define as a heritage resource. Examples include contemporary settlements, religious sacred sites, ceremonial

grounds and plant communities, and massive geological resources. These are often, but not exclusively affiliated with Native American tribes. Chaw'Se Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park, Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park, Sutter Buttes State Park, and Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park all contain components reflective of ethnographic landscapes.

Expanding our understanding, appreciation and interpretation of cultural landscapes not only increases our knowledge of ordinary environments, it can foster a broader and deeper understanding of our history and culture. Or as Peirce Lewis concludes: "The man-made landscape...provides strong evidence of the kind of people we are, and were, and are in the process of becoming."



**Manzanar National Historic Site preserves the multiple layers of history on site, rather than focus on the restoration of one landscape over all others.**

# Time Traveling to an Ohlone Village

**By Chuck Bancroft**  
**Supervising Ranger**  
**Point Lobos State Reserve**

Join me as we venture up San Jose Creek Canyon for today's third grade school program. We meet the students, teachers, and parent chaperones on the service road that goes up the canyon. They have just walked about 400 yards from where the bus parks to see our team waiting at the old cattle gates. I introduce our team and explain the day's program. We will be walking up the canyon another 1/3 of a mile to reach our village site.

The canyon is relatively narrow with wonderful steep slopes to the top of the ridges on either side. Coastal scrub and maritime chaparral are on the north side and a dense pine forest climbs to the top of the east side. If we're lucky we can see deer traversing the slopes and a red-tailed hawk soaring high above us.

To begin the walk I inform the students we are going back in time through my "time tunnel" (the old cattle gates) and they must walk backwards through the tunnel. We watch the kids and advise them to walk slowly, carefully looking over their shoulders so they don't step on any bushes or each other. On the other side of the "time tunnel" we stop to reflect.

I now introduce myself as Nine Feathers. We are now in the past and we are now the people who live here. This is now our trail from the ocean to the village.

I ask the students to look around and tell me what doesn't belong in this landscape. They of course point out the cars, the fence, the telephone wires, the basketball hoop, and their parents' cell phones. One student always says their clothes and I reply we still have clothes but they are much different than what we wear in the future. Another student will say the houses don't belong, but I say our homes are different, made from the resources we have around us.

The students are anxious and we start on the walk. As we proceed I position a different student at different locations to identify a native plant and its use by the people. They have to say in a clear loud voice what the plant is and how it is used to every student and parent that goes by. We pass by wonderful displays of native plants and incredible views

up the canyon as we walk the trail that rises and falls with the landscape. We may even startle a covey of quail as we get closer to our village site.

Reid Woodward, a volunteer at Point Lobos for over 26 years, awaits us as we come down a rise to see a magnificent oak tree. Under this steely oak are the frames for three "third grade sized" shelters known as ruks. Mr. Woodward and several other volunteers welcome the students. We have them sit under the tree, with the sound of the creek and a breeze rustling the branches and leaves of the cottonwood trees as accent to Mr. Woodward's drum.

I now explain how the morning will unfold. We divide the students into three groups. Each group will spend about 30 minutes at each of the three learning stations.



**Volunteer Reid Woodward telling a "Tale of Coyote"**





**Students and parents come back to the village for a morning of song, dance, stories, and a class picnic.**

One group goes to a circle next to the creek under a small grove of redwoods to learn and discuss village life. With the use of pictures and "artifacts" the children learn how important the resources were to the Ohlone people.

A second group goes to a circle of cottonwoods with Mr. Woodward. He is dressed as a mountain man and is the best of storytellers. The children hear tales of Coyote. The howls and laughter make you stop what you're doing so you too can hear about the mischievous Coyote.

The third group stays with me to learn how to build a ruk. The ruk is a shelter made of a willow frame with tule grass tied into mats that cover the structure. The children learn that the renewable resources for the structure, including the twine used to tie the mats together, are harvested from this immediate area. The

children get to make their own small mats to take home and tie the large mats onto the structures.

After all three groups have rotated through their stations we all gather under the large oak to admire the

work that has been accomplished. The children now walk back to the future, get on their bus and return to school.

The next day we do the same program for the other third graders. If the work goes well, we have built three small ruks and our "village" is complete.

On the third day everyone returns to the canyon. All four classes of third graders and their parents come back to the village for a morning of song, dance, and stories, followed by a class picnic.

We sit under the mighty oak and hear the beat of a drum accompanied by clapper sticks. Patrick Orozco leads his group into the village performing the entrance song. All are dressed in traditional Rumsien regalia. The rest of the morning is filled with the family performing various dances and songs, and more wonderful stories of Coyote.



**2007 National Association for Interpretation award winners: Brian Cahill with his Meritorious Service Award and Wendy Harrison (far right) accepting the Excellence in Interpretive Support award on behalf of Calaveras Big Trees Association**

# A Culturally Significant Desert Landscape

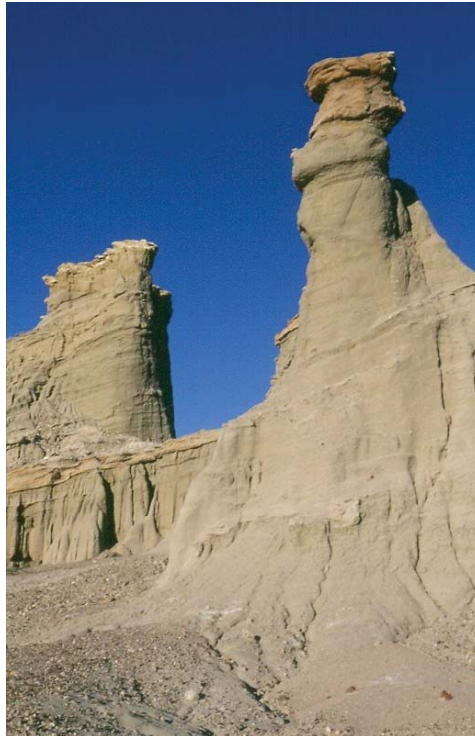
**By Mark Faull**

**Retired State Park Ranger  
Red Rock Canyon State Park**

In the northwestern Mojave Desert of Kern County, California, the limited rains of an arid environment have etched over endless eons a powerful theater of sculptured rock. The scenic inspiration and wonder, combined with unique biological and scientific values, led this badlands landscape to be preserved as a unit of the California State Park System.

Human use and perception of this canyon, and its exploitable resources, has changed and imbedded this landscape over time with multiple layers of cultural patterning. These human use patterns form a mosaic of interesting and intriguing overlapping "cultural landscapes" that portray the complexity of Red Rock Canyon; a topography influenced by human behavior and where human behavior has in turn been influenced by topography.

The human use of space over time within Red Rock Canyon can be broadly defined or categorized within three overarching use patterns. All three themes display both social and economic roles within human societies. The first category is defined by physiography. Red Rock Canyon is part of the topographic feature known as the El Paso mountains and, as the name of the mountain range implies, is an important pass through which regional transportation is required due to the canyon's occurrence



adjacent to the Sierra Nevada and El Paso mountains. Red Rock Canyon is a natural funnel in the landscape and has been an essential transportation corridor for multiple cultures. The presence of water, in the form of local springs, was also a critical attraction to human passage through a xeric or desert environment.

The second use pattern has been the exploitation of geologic resources. The aridity of the desert landscape produces less vegetative concealment and thus geologic resources are more readily exposed to human investigation and use in desert landscapes than elsewhere.

The third principal use of Red Rock Canyon has been human aesthetic appreciation and spiritual inspiration derived from the canyon's majesty. This aspect, which appears to date

from the earliest cultures forward, has increased in importance relative to increased and concentrated human populations and the invention of improved modes of transportation. These three human use patterns remain repetitive themes transitioning all of the cultures and their attempted endeavors that have impacted Red Rock Canyon.

The Red Rock Canyon landform contains at least four significant "cultural landscapes"; those of (1) a regional Native American chert quarry, (2) a preserved historic dry placer mining terrain, (3) a Los Angeles/Owens River aqueduct construction site, and (4) a site of motion picture heritage. All of these activities portray significance within a broader regional, statewide or even national context.

The quarrying of high quality and plentiful cherts lens, extremely desirable for Native American tool production, fits into a larger pattern of social activity, organization and redistribution or trade of resources. Thus the contributions of Red Rock Canyon help to define the regional prehistoric picture and clarify how that picture changed over time.

At first glance, the scale of the remains of Red Rock Canyon's 1893 placer gold mining boom might appear to pale in comparison to much larger gold processing operations around the state. However, the 200 miners who for a short time resided in Red Rock Canyon used a very unique gold recovery technique in the absence of water to separate the



gold from the soil. Known as "dry placer mining," a methodology only employed in limited desert regions, Red Rock Canyon represents the only park in the world that preserves the remnant mining terrain of such a unique form of mineral extraction.

For a two year period from 1908 to 1910 a spur line railroad, known as the Red Rock Railroad, used the geomorphology of the canyon pass to deliver construction goods to a 20-mile segment of the first Los Angeles Aqueduct. This aqueduct, the first large water rearrangement project of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, contributed immensely to the reshaping of California history, land use patterning and to the shift in the balance of California political power from northern harbors and rivers to the previously arid southland. For these reasons, this aqueduct holds national significance, and Red Rock Canyon played a role in this conversion towards the modern California landscape.

Finally, the stunning, rugged and scenic parapets and palisades of Red Rock Canyon have been utilized in over 150 motion pictures, where the theater of the landscape has played an important and dramatic role as the backdrop upon which actors and directors develop their plot lines. Beginning during the silent picture era, the majority of the movies filmed in Red Rock Canyon were westerns, which used the colorful and imposing backdrop of Red Rock Canyon as a graphic stage upon which to set in motion the mythic image of the American West. Red Rock Canyon has thus helped to achieve a global image or ideal of the American western frontier landscape.

With the advent of the automobile, travel and access to the Mojave Desert and the scenic halls of Red Rock Canyon increased. The aesthetic appreciation of the canyon for the first time in the American period began to soar. Camping became popular within Red Rock Canyon and proposals to preserve the canyon as a "national monument" surfaced as early as 1915.

By 1920 longtime Red Rock resident Rudolf Hagen was providing recreational maps of the canyon to the public, realizing the economics of tourism. By the mid-1920s travel magazines, such as "Touring Topics," routinely touted outings to Red Rock Canyon. Red Rock Canyon had entered its "age of adjectives" describing its hallowed scenery, and had become a point of destination rather than simply transit. Citizens' efforts to preserve Red Rock Canyon continued for decades, until legislation was finally enacted to preserve this special canyon in 1968.

While Red Rock Canyon holds several more prominent cultural landscapes, as a whole the canyon

and park represent a cultural mosaic, nicked by the scars of innumerable human interactions, and in a certain sense is itself a cultural landscape. Red Rock Canyon State Park is a landscape where scenic appreciation, stress reduction and species preservation have prevailed and where cultural resources are valued, protected, studied and preserved as part of our societal heritage.

Red Rock Canyon State Park remains a valuable contemplative model upon which to test and refine the interacting concepts of "cultural landscape" and significance. The utilization of the cultural landscape concept can help land managers focus upon and plan to preserve those important human use themes that interconnect us with our heritage. In addition, these same concepts offer interpreters incredible potential to build greater and grander patterns of human connectivity into public exhibits and interpretive presentations. Such an approach can serve to enrich our cultural presentations and provide greater beneficial insights to those valued customers we serve.



# Playgrounds in California State Parks???

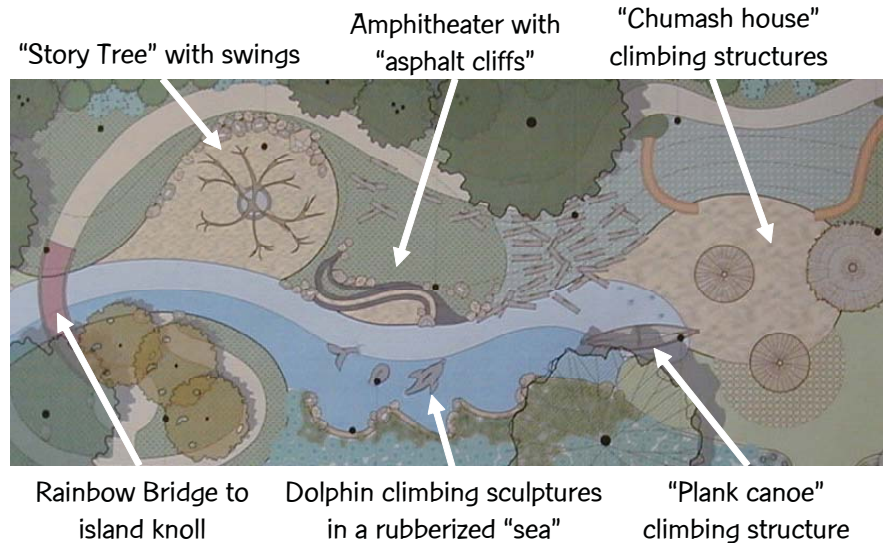
By Wes Chapin

Regional Interpretive Specialist  
Channel Coast District

Have you ever heard someone say, "We don't do playgrounds in California State Parks"? Traditionally, we have not thought of these urban recreational facilities as consistent with our "mission." But in June 2003, the Director of the City of Carpinteria's Recreation and Parks Department, Matt Roberts, and Wade Nomura from the Carpinteria Morning Rotary Club approached Channel Coast District Superintendent Rich Rojas with a proposal to install a typical play structure in the day-use area at Carpinteria State Beach.

Seeing opportunities in their offer but mindful of the resistance such a traditional playground might generate in the department, Rich felt a better location for the project might be a new parcel we had recently acquired from Union Pacific Railroad that was badly in need of improvement. He also wanted to see if there was a way to create a unique alternative to the City's proposal that might be more in keeping with the State Park mission, so he turned to Donna Pozzi, Chief of the Interpretation and Education Division, for some help.

Donna well knew that Carpinteria—both the town and the State Beach—are built on the site of the Chumash Indian community of *Mishopshnow*, which in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a major center for constructing plank canoes, those marvelous ocean-going craft



**The new Chumash Play Area at Carpinteria State Beach will feature resource-based thematic interpretive elements.**

for which the Chumash are justly known. Resourceful technologists, the Chumash made good use of the asphalt that still oozes from active seeps in the area to caulk their watercraft. Legend has it that the sailors of Juan Cabrillo's 1542 expedition, seeing canoes in various stages of construction on the beach, tagged the community *La Carpinteria* (the carpenter's shop). The Chumash are a major part of Carpinteria's heritage and have been a primary interpretive focus of Carpinteria State Beach since it opened in 1931.

Donna and staff members Carol Cullens, Philip Carey and John Mott, who worked at Carpinteria State Beach as a ranger in the mid-1970s, brainstormed ways to integrate this rich history into the design for the play area. They presented some preliminary concepts to Rich,

who turned to Southern Service Center Landscape Architect Barney Matsumoto to refine their ideas. Barney, Rich and I met on the site of the proposed project and during our discussion, the possibilities began to get exciting. The new concept called for replacing the mass-produced play structure with interpretive thematic elements that related to the cultural and natural resources of the park.

Not only was this becoming an opportunity to partner with the City of Carpinteria and the city's private sector to enhance the community's recreational resources, but the project also had the potential to become something rare in California State Parks—the blending of an active recreational facility and a quality interpretive experience, interpretation for the swing set—swinging interpretation!



## — A Lesson in “Swinging Interpretation”

**“The project has the potential to become something rare in California State Parks: the blending of an active recreational facility and a quality resource-based interpretive experience.”**

Barney developed a concept drawing and Rich presented it to Matt and Wade. Would they buy it? The price tag was higher and the labor was more involved than for the cookie-cutter play structure they had in mind. Meanwhile, I met with Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, a Chumash elder, to get her reaction to the project. What concerns might the Chumash community have?

Both meetings went better than expected. Matt and Wade caught Rich's enthusiasm for the new approach, and Julie provided important cautions we would have to take into account. For example, we would not use any Chumash art symbols on surfaces that could be walked on. Continued collaboration would be essential, too, but she liked the concept. We also consulted with the park's rangers and Maintenance staff who provided important input that was incorporated into the project plans.

With local support assured, Rich approached the department's executive staff. Their reaction was enthusiastic and Rich was given the green light to proceed. A Santa Barbara landscape architecture and planning firm retained by the Rotary

Club has further refined the initial concept.

As now planned, the new Chumash Play Area will include a “village” with climbing structures in the shape of Chumash houses and a “plank canoe,” a “sculptural story tree” with swings, and a small amphitheater with “asphalt cliff” walls.

Shade structures and seating combined with interpretive panels for watchful parents, dolphin climbing sculptures emerging from a rubberized play surface colored in shades of blue, and a bridge from “mainland” mounds to an “island knoll” where imaginative kids (are there any other kind?) can act out the Chumash legend of the Rainbow Bridge or watch for Spanish galleons.

Hardy native plants and trees and a grass play area will replace scruffy weeds and eucalyptus trees in a space slightly larger than a thin football field.

We're now shepherding the project through the bureaucratic woods. Our Concessions Section is putting the finishing touches on an amended operating agreement with the City who will maintain the Chumash

Play Area once it opens. Matt is preparing the necessary Coastal Permit Application and supporting documentation that we will present to the City as the Local Coastal Plan Agency. Wade and his fellow Rotarians have been patiently lining up donations of material and labor and steadily adding to their project fund. Except for staff time, this project has not and will not require the use of any department money, including future operating and maintenance costs.

As important as these benefits are, the thing we're all looking forward to is the expressions on children's faces as they discover that having fun and gaining a better understanding and appreciation of their heritage can go hand in hand. Yes, we CAN do playgrounds in California State Parks—interpretively!



**Have you heard about the upcoming interpretation courses being offered by the Mott Training Center?**

**See the listing on page 4!**

# Finding Meaning in Cultural Landscapes

An Interview with Karen Adams, Associate Landscape Architect for the Southern Service Center, Acquisition and Development Division

**Interviewed by**  
**Nancy Mendez, Guest Editor**

## How did you get involved with cultural landscapes?

Before coming to work for State Parks, I worked both as a designer and as a planner. I worked on a number of community general plans, primarily developing conservation, land use, and open space elements. Someone who cared had always pulled together a history of the area. I would reference this in my inventory of existing conditions. A general plan has a long reach, some twenty or more years, into the future. It became an unspoken part of my job to reconcile all three time frames (past, present, and future) into a cohesive whole.

## Describe some of your cultural landscape projects.

Really all of my projects involve cultural landscapes. Every place has a past, present, and future, and people associated with it that have shaped it and imprinted it with their wants, needs, and values.

There is a pretty wide range of options when dealing with cultural landscapes, but a rather narrow range of appropriate options for a given time and place. The San Clemente State Beach historic cottage landscape is at one end of these options. The Historic Landscape Management Plan for Will Rogers State Historic Park is at the other. Most fall somewhere in between.

The California Conservation Corps (CCC) era cottage at San Clemente SB had one outstanding character-defining landscape feature, a fine old adobe garden wall. There was nothing of merit in the hodge-podge of lawn, trees, and shrubs that was planted over time by park staff and residents. The cottage and landscape were given adaptive re-use treatments as a visitor center amidst a beach-cottage garden for public use. The wall was rebuilt and is, without contest, the reigning feature of this contemporary landscape.

The landscape of Will Rogers SHP, on the other hand, had enough integrity and historic documentation to warrant nearly full conservation and restoration. This historic landscape revealed over time and much effort a significance far beyond what was at first apparent.

## Pío Pico SHP was the first cultural landscape we worked on together. Can you describe the site's transformation?

Pío Pico SHP presented many challenges, but the place itself ultimately rose up to meet them like a phoenix from the ashes (actually from the dust and debris of an earthquake). The place was hot, noisy, and forlorn. It was surrounded by freeways, chain link, busy arterials, railroad tracks, and dense commercial development. At five acres, it represented a mere slip of the original 9,000 acre "ranchita" of Governor Pico.

The Pico home was hidden behind a barrage of other structures – a municipal pump house, a park residence turned operations center, and a maintenance garage, as well as a gaggle of utility lines, and a paved parking lot – you get the picture. As a cultural landscape it mostly expressed how forgotten and unimportant it was. It certainly expressed the movement of time, but there was way too much sadness.

There were only fragments of documentation to work with and a paucity of historic fabric left on the land itself. Two sketches and



**Drawings by Karen Adams for the Pío Pico State Historic Park cultural landscape project**



the occasional diary entry became the heart of the rebuilding. The plan moved out from the home itself, much as Pico probably envisioned it. Remnants of fields – barley, corn, and wheat – were retraced onto a base map, their historic outlines, albeit reduced, finding their way back onto the land itself. Vineyards and citrus trees were replanted. The progeny of the original blue ash still held sentry near the home, offering respite from the hot sun.

Masonry walls were erected to reduce noise and hold the modern world at bay. The wall would become a canvas for murals that connected one generation to another. Everything about the place became an opportunity to stitch old and new together.

### **What should we be looking for in order to better interpret a site's cultural landscape?**

Mostly they are conspicuous things, features identified with a certain time or kind of place-making – CCC rockwork, rustic roads, windbreak plantings, and rural fencing.

Sometimes it is a subtle feature or aspect that is overlooked, or changed for some well-meant improvement. One that comes to mind is the original grading and drainage of Will Rogers' ranch – the quirky grading of the polo field, the width and turn of the ranch roads, the unique pitch of each pasture notched into canyon walls, the sinuous climb up from Rustic Canyon.

A place gets a certain heft and feel when it is shaped by mule teams, fresnos (road graders), and a

cowboy-movie star-rancher with the help of a former railroad engineer. Modern heavy equipment and laser levels can take it out in the blink of an eye.

### **How do various disciplines contribute to the cultural landscape planning process?**

Collaboration is a necessity if you want a comprehensive understanding. Some of the best information comes from maintenance staff that has a long history with a park. They often have the most intimate, hands-on relationship with a place.



Archaeologists reveal layers hidden from common view and work with a site's earliest cultural influences. They give me a sense of the landscape over a larger stretch of time and one that gives truer context to the usually brief historic periods I'm focused on.

Historians open hidden windows as well. They ferret out information from the vast visual and written record, and give us relative "frames" of reference to compare and contrast one time and place with another. What I wish park historians had more time and support to do is gather oral histories, the stories or narratives that make the landscape come alive.

Ecologists bring essential information about the landscape. All of our cultural landscape work makes only limited sense without the natural

history that informs a place. That is what is real, alive, timeless, and enduring. I see their role expanding in the future, eventually taking us full circle into a new relationship with our native landscapes.

### **Where does interpretation fit into the cultural landscape planning process?**

Everyone who has a long-time association with a particular place can offer those who do not a greater understanding. And understanding is not only the first "hoop" in the process of working with cultural landscapes, it informs the rest of the process. Interpretation is a critical link in this chain because it fully connects the entire process back to place and to the experience of that place. But interpretation really needs to inform the process way back when planning and design are first taking place, not merely as an appliqué to the end of it.

### **Is there anything more you'd like to say about interpreting cultural landscapes?**

Many interpretive opportunities arise from, or are suggested by, the landscape itself – its layout, character, vegetation patterns, spatial arrangements, and the way people approach and move through it.

Each place has its idiosyncrasies, and you want to clue off them in a way that people "get" where they are in the world and make connections to it, however tenuous. My real goal, as a State Park landscape architect, is to provide for that connection to place. You can see how compatible that is with interpretation.

# Buried Under a Cultural Landscape

By Linda Cooper

Museum Curator II

Northern Buttes District

Our evening cemetery tours at Shasta State Historic Park are held each October by "The Light of the Moon." This event began nine years ago, and is so popular that we can only accommodate the four tours of thirty people by reservation. Last year we charged \$2.00 a person for the first time, and still had a waiting list. Is it the refreshments we offer, the friendly service, the full moon, or the interpretation?

I think it's all of these factors that cultural landscapes can offer. It's about inviting the visitors to wander away from their more typical interpretive experiences, and perhaps jar them a little with the tasting of their mortality while feeling the starry evening on their shoulders. This is done outside of the walls of the museum setting, with a full moon, and beneath the shivering trees. Perhaps we hook the visitors with the landscape, and then further entice them with the cultural aspect to create a package deal with the outcome of listening to the history from these former residents of old Shasta.

Initially this "cultural landscape tour" was a source of fretting for me. I wondered if we would get bad publicity for holding the event so close to Halloween. My fears proved unfounded, especially the year a Cooperating Association board member made tombstone cookies for the refreshment table.



Perhaps it helped that in the publicity, we clarified that this was a "historical cemetery tour." And our tours are indeed, historical. For example, Phoebe Colburn, who was buried at the Pioneer Cemetery in 1875, gives us the opportunity to describe how an African American woman managed a business in a Gold Rush town.

During daylight hours, our Junior Docents lead school group tours to the cemetery. They do this in period clothing, and at times pause by a grave site to play a violin and sing. This is another method of integrating the various sounds, smells, and interpretation into a general landscape.

By moonlight or sunlight, our visitors want to know how the Shasta pioneers changed the landscape, and the Pioneer Cemetery is our venue

for telling those stories of change. And it's incumbent upon us to use every interpretive tool imaginatively to challenge the visitor while we preserve the cultural landscape.





# California's Tapestry

A Diversity Feature Article

Fall 2007

A well-worn path, hand-crafted fences, cupped depressions on rock outcroppings – this intersection of nature and culture are among the features that reveal cultural landscapes. From the gardens at Sonoma State Historic Park to the polo field at Will Rogers State Historic Park, these remnants of the past elevate the idea of landscape. Cultural landscapes bring to light a site's sense of place, breathing life into a location and the stories it contains.

Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park is one example of the diverse cultural landscapes that are part of California State Parks. Located in the Sierra Nevada foothills, the site is a wonderful expression of cultural connections through landscape. Its ancient grinding rocks are preserved next to a reconstructed Miwok village, with a ceremonial *hun'ge* (roundhouse) used throughout the year by local Native Americans.

Also referred to by its Miwok name, *Chaw'se* (grinding rock) is kept alive by the presence of its people. It is a place where both culture-bearers and guests can celebrate, learn, and share responsibility for the land through continual care and use of a cultural landscape.



During the annual acorn gathering season, families celebrate with dancing, hand games, singing, and storytelling. Park visitors are welcome to attend. Other times of the year, school groups visit the site, exploring the reconstructed village and the massive bedrock mortars.

A secluded area of the park holds a special place for overnight experiences. A group of *U'macha'* (bark houses) provides a traditional-style shelter for a non-traditional type of camping.

Amidst the scent of cedar and the soft sounds of sleepy whispers, an evening in a bark house is an unforgettable experience.

The discovery of diverse cultural landscapes surrounds us in other sites throughout the state. They quietly call us to explore them, and to share their magic with others, deepening the bond between our visitors and the cultural landscapes of California State Parks.

-Nancy Mendez,  
Guest Editor



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